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ON LAW AND TRUTH

Lectio magistralis on the occasion of the awarding of the honorific title of 'Distinguished Scholar of Natural Law'

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I wondered, how could I carry out the task that the Ius Naturale Research Group gave me, how could I hold a *lectio magistralis* that could arouse some interest amongst you? I was in fact rather embarassed for the Group's decision to grant me such a prestigious award – the one of „Distinguished Scholar of Natural Law" – which certainly surpasses my merits. I have thus decided to draw a short itinerary of my studies hopefully capable of justiying to some extent my presence here. Of course it is always very difficult to write an autobiography: it is a task that would be better for others, since looking from outside is clearly more objective and profitable.

Nevertheless, it seemed to me that it was sufficiently appropriate to show you how my itinerary as a researcher has crossed the themes concerning the natural law theories and what forms my reflection on these themes had taken over time. I am perfectly aware that an attempt of this kind inevitably risks becoming a sort of *confessio philosophi* (which is also an undertaking I have never tried before), but just for this reason I would like to propose this old formula as a tribute in such a special circumstance. Please consider it is sign of the particular friendship that binds me to this Faculty and to the Hungarian people.

1. Education in the University of Padua: the philosophical background

What was the state of the art of the philosophy of law in general and particularly in Italy in the seventies, well, this is something that I could't know when I began my studies at the University, as a young student and an absolute beginner. I had prepared my exam of legal philosophy, and later my Master's degree thesis, on the basis of my Professor's teaching and of the books he suggested to me. What seemed sufficiently clear to me was that in those years two opposite visions of the world confronted each

other bitterly. I interpreted them as a 'spiritualistic' and a 'materialistic' vision, with their corollaries of ideologies (even radical). Quite evidently, the 'materialistic' one was connected to normativism,[1] which was at that time a triumphant expression of legal positivism.

It was an interpretation, as you can imagine, very partial, almost naive, since the picture was actually much more complex than my youthful simplification. But it's true that normativists and anti-normativists faced each other like two opposing factions, and the teaching given by the pupils of professor Enrico Opocher of the University of Padua (which was where I took my first steps in the philosophy of law) focused a lot on criticism of Hans Kelsen and his normativistic theory,[2] embodied in Italy particularly by Norberto Bobbio, Giovanni Tarello, Uberto Scarpelli, Riccardo Guastini. At the same time, my masters hesitated to take side with the 'natural law front' (or more precisely with the Thomist one), since they were largely nourished by Continental philosophies (particularly by phaenomenology and existentialism) and by a reading of Aristotle strictly tied to his dialectic, typical of the philosophical school of Padua.

I remember a fundamental concept that I learned later in the years of my PhD in Padua: that of 'legal geometry'.[3] This category of legal-political theory has accompanied me for many years, and I recently recovered it for my first year lessons. I find it extremely useful to undestand under the epistemological – but I would say also psychological – profile the great turning point that led to the end of the Middle Ages and to the establishment of national states over long and bloody centuries. Until that moment the legal thought, I mean – the law, had grown up autonomously on a universal Romanistic basis without complexes of inferiority or subjection, neither with respect to other sciences, nor with respect to politics. It was really a *civilis sapientia*. I could go so far as to affirm that, in the period in which that law and that legal science were operating, a widely shared European identity was established: the medieval legal order was the very substance of Europe, which at that time did not yet have such a name, but did understand itself as *societas christianorum*.

The great turning point I am talking about is obviously that of modernity, consisting, together with a geopolitical shift from the Mediterranean basin to the North Atlantic, of a change in the epistemic model which, from the *ordo scientiarum* of *trivium* and *quadrivium*, was reduced in the 16th century to a particular portion of the *ordo* itself: the one of the so called 'analytical' or 'apodictic' reasoning. It is interesting to observe that this type of reasoning knew its modern success not in the field of the logical-discursive disciplines in which it was born, but in that of mathematics and geometry. This progressive growth and supremacy of the analytical method was accompanied by the philosophical constitution of the concept of the individual, unknown to the classical

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1 Stanley L. Paulson: *Normativity and Norms: Critical Perspectives on Kelsenian Themes*. Oxford, Oxford Scolarship, 1999.

2 Enrico Opocher: *Lezioni di filosofia del diritto*. Padova, Cedam, ²1993.; Giuseppe Zaccaria: Enrico Opocher. In: *Enciclopedia italiana di scienze, lettere ed arti. Il contributo italiano alla storia del pensiero. Diritto. Ottava appendice*. Roma, Istituto Treccani, 2012. 766. ff. (http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/enrico-opocher_%28Il-Contributo-italiano-alla-storia-del-Pensiero:-Diritto%29/).

3 Francesco Gentile: *Intelligenza politica e ragion di stato*. Milano, Giuffrè, ²1984.

and medieval world, a concept that revolves around the question of the supremacy of the will.

It is voluntarism and the propensity for analytics as *scientia scientiarum* that pushed towards a reworking of some institutions of medieval public law, drawing from them the modern conception of sovereignty, *c'est à dire* the state.

In essence, what I learned then during my doctorate was that voluntarism and mathematics were only two sides of the same coin, that of modernity. That modernity that would have rapidly developed its preference for a law which is no longer epistemically autonomous, but inspired by the fashionable scientific method, and no longer genetically autonomous, but produced exclusively by the state on the basis of criteria immanent to the state itself. Codification was only a natural consequence of these premises.

It could therefore be said that, in the course of my education, I have associated, for historical and philosophical reasons, the criticism of legal positivism to a broader criticism of modernity, for its epistemological reductivist character and for the idea of a sovereignty founded only on power (what Kelsen calls the 'head of Gorgona').[4]

My antibodies against modernity were due above all to an incurable attraction for metaphysics and, connected to this, to the elements of the existential and dialogical philosophies with which I had come into contact in my Paduan period. Both pushed me to put in doubt the possibility of a scientific explanation of law in an exclusively formal or empirical sense, since the scientific method of proof has an axiomatic character that does not allow discussions on the premises. To me it seemed instead that law, like politics (like philosophy), could not be constituted without the exercise of a dialectical intelligence capable of taking into consideration different theses. An intelligence, therefore, that uses a more flexible logic than the mathematical one, which is based on undisputed hypotheses.

According to the teaching of the school of Padua, this type of dialectical knowledge is defined as 'anipotetic' (not hypothetical), and indicates the possibility of organizing in a rational way the differences that are produced in the discourses and in the claims in conflict, above all through the use of the principle of non contradiction. This principle was considered by my Paduan teachers the maximum expression of logos.

In those years I was warned about the cruciality of the notion of principle (*arche*) and its Aristotelian reading, according to which no object is simply a sum of parts (as Cartesian modern science must presume) – and therefore not even society – but it is a whole of parts *plus* its principle of determination, which constitutes its transcendent and non-manipulable grounding.[5] Today I would say: that for which to things is due a respect that derives from the fact that we do not have total epistemic power over them.

In this philosophical background I began to mature my first research experiences.

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4 Hans Kelsen: Die Gleichheit vor dem Gesetz in Sinne des Art. 109 der Reichsverfassung. In: Hans Kelsen: *Veröffentlichung der Vereinigung der Deutschen Staatsrechtslehrer*. Berlin–Leipzig, de Gruyter, 1927. III. 55.

5 Aristotle: *Politics*. I, 2. 1253a.

2. St. Augustine: between rhetoric and truth

My first field of research was the thought of St. Augustine. It was the topic of my master's thesis and of my first articles, and later of a book.[6] My approach was both epistemological and metaphysical: I looked to Augustine through the lens of the crisis of modern science, trying to understand how Augustine raised the question of truth in relation to law. It was a great opportunity to discover the theme of the relationship between truth and persuasion, which Augustine inherited from Platonism and framed in a Christian perspective.

St. Augustine had experienced the overwhelming condition of spiritual conversion, which is *prima facie* a supra-rational way of accessing the truth. Starting from such condition, that of the Faith, he sought to develop a philosophical point of view that included the question of justice. Evidently the determination of the truth, like that of justice, could not be for him the conclusion of a formal deduction. In fact, in its search for both truth and justice, our intellect does not proceed from axioms, but meets different positions and more or less effective arguments. Augustine rejects both the way of deduction from pre-established dogmas, and that of skepticism and emotivism: truth belongs to an inner dimension ('*in interiore homine habitat veritas*')[7] not separated from the exercise of intelligence. But it is an intelligence capable of discussing the reasons of the opposite argument (and thus dialectic) and of handling persuasive effectiveness (and thus rhetoric).

This was a crucial question for Augustine, who in his profane life had been an expert on rhetoric and a professional rhetorician – and naturally his first impulse could have been to identify rhetoric with a non-Christian life and, therefore, to condemn it. But he did not, since he realized that persuasion becomes a deception only if it is subjected to mere individual power (as the ancient sophists claimed), while it can be a precious help in the search for truth. There are wonderful pages of his *De magistro* in which St. Augustine speaks about teaching as a common search for truth.

3. Francis Petrarch: humanism and modernity

What I had learned about Augustine was later very useful for me to address my second author, who had had a life experience in some ways resembling that of Augustine: Francis Petrarch.[8] He also tells of his experience of conversion from a profane life to a more spiritually oriented one. But most af all Petrarch too lived in an age of transition. For Augustine it was the transition from the Roman empire to the Middle Ages, for Petrarch it was the passage from the Middle Ages to the humanistic age. Both Augustine

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6 Maurizio Manzin: *Ordine politico e verità in sant'Agostino. Riflessioni sulla crisi della scienza moderna*. Padova, Cedam, 1998.

7 Augustine of Hippo: *De vera religione*. 39, 72.

8 Maurizio Manzin: *Il petrarchismo giuridico. Filosofia e logica del diritto agli inizi dell'umanesimo*. Padova, Cedam, 1994.

and Petrarch were in the limit between two worlds – in the limit between the old and the new – and for both the question of truth and persuasion was at stake.

Also in this case my approach was above all an epistemological one. Petrarch had not only written many amazing works of poetry, but also numerous letters in which he explained his philosophical and moral thought. Petrarch had an enormous influence on the formation of European culture; today we refer to him above all as a poet – for Italians he is also one of the fathers of their national language – but for contemporaries he was very influential as a philosopher and moralist. The students of the universities, especially those of law faculties, eagerly read his works and disseminated them to all nations. Petrarch became an author à la *page*, almost an *idéologue*. I realized that it is essential, to outline the developments of legal humanism, to understand his thinking, and I realized also that no scholar has ever done this in depth, probably because, despite having studied law, Petrarch never wrote legal treatises, and his literary production is therefore alien to legal historians.

I obtained, especially from the analysis of his correspondence, a series of data that served me to reconstruct his theory of knowledge. Petrarch provides epistemically relevant information particularly when he argues with nominalists within Scholastic philosophy, who were his greatest enemies. Their greatest crime, according to Petrarch, was to play with reasoning, as if it were disconnected from reality. He considered these scholastics quite similar to the sophists condemned by Socrates. It is clear that he understood very well the distortion to which they submitted logic, once transformed into a purely formal and abstract game of syllogisms. To Petrarch, the noble Plato's and Aristotle's dialectic had become, in the late thirteenth century, analytics – and as such it had triumphed in the universities. The traces of rhetoric, then, were completely lost. Petrarch relentlessly accused the nominalistic scholastics of knowing very little about Aristotle – of knowing only a part of his thought, and of practicing it in an inauthentic and repetitive way.

I have written in my book on Petrarch that he could be considered the 'unfinished dawn' of humanism, taking the term from the Italian translation of a famous book by Henri De Lubac[9] – and in fact it went just like that: most humanist scholars did not try to re-establish Aristotelian logic in an authentic sense, but rejected it completely, and crushed the dialectic on rhetoric, transforming them into pure art of discourse and literature. In doing so, the humanists became co-responsible for the separation between the knowledges characteristic of modernity (the 'two cultures', as C.P. Snow wrote):[10] on the one hand science, on the other humanities. At this point, where was the truth? I mean: in scientific proofs or in the art? – And where was the law? In a sense, we could say that European culture, in the modern age, became schizophrenic.

To me, the seal of these tendencies was imprinted by Descartes: with him, the dimension of science ends up absorbing *de facto* all the space of the public discussion on

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9 Henri de Lubac: *Pic de la Mirandole*. Paris, Aubier Montaigne, 1974. The book has been tranlated into Italian with the title: *L'alba incompiuta del Rinascimento*. Milano, Jaka Books, 1977.

10 Charles P. Snow: *The Two Cultures and the Scientific Revolution*. London, Cambridge University Press, 1959.

what is true. After Descartes, science (or to say better the application of the analytical method), has been considered by definition the only kind of knowledge to be universal, and as such free from individual preferences: *public*, in fact. It was therefore up to the humanities to be relegated to the space of the private, of the subjective, of what is not objectively true. We can thus understand why Hobbes and many others demanded the model of geometry for political and legal science: because that of dialectical and rhetorical logic was from then on considered subjective, vague – a sort of tattle, of bla-bla-bla. During the course of the modern age the term 'dialectic' will be used to designate a variety of activities, and the term 'rhetoric' will become negative: a synonym of empty speech, needlessly adorned, in the end misleading.

But it was interesting for me to discover, while I was studying Petrarch, that modernity was born with an antibody against scientist reductionism – an 'unfinished dawn' as I mentioned before – which was not the simple (and impossible) return to the 'identic', that is to say to the good old logic, but to a rebirth of the essential. Heidegger wrote that the 'identic' (*das Gleiche*) is not the 'same' (*das Selbe*),[11] and about that he is certainly right. Naturally Petrarch has not been the only one '*wesentlicher Denker*'[12] (also Giambattista Vico played this role, for example), but surely his figure is remarkable. Through him it is possible to come back to a broader concept of logic, prior to Frege's reduction, and much more suited to our times of '*converging sciences*', of epistemological pluralism and of post-analytic accounts on law.

Actually, when my book on Petrarch was published in 1994, it was considered of no importance for the legal-philosophical debate, and was echoed only in France and only by some scholars of the history of law. I should perhaps have mentioned Hart and Dworkin...

4. The neoplatonic roots of modern sytematic thought

The research on St. Augustine and Petrarch had led me to reflect more and more on the philosophical foundation of the scientistic privilege which, in the domain of law, has produced the theories of legal positivism in all their formalistic and empirical variants.[13] When and why did European culture fall in love with a certain way of thinking that excludes access to truth to methods other than that based on hypotheses, axioms and deductions? When and why had the *system* become a model for scientific and then also legal knowledge?

For Petrarch this had happened because of the distortion of Aristotelianism caused by scholasticism, and namely by nominalism. But according to a historical analysis, the starting point of this interpretation could be traced back to earlier times: to the spread in Europe of the *corpus aeropagiticum* and of the *liber de causis*. One could go back to the 9th century and to the translation of the Pseudo-Dionysius made by

[11] Martin Heidegger: Brief über den 'Humanismus'. In: *Gesamtausgabe.* Band 9 (*Wegmarken*). Frankfurt a. M., Klostermann Verlag, 2004. 363.

[12] Heidegger op. cit. 363.

[13] Maurizio Manzin: *Ordo iuris. La nascita del pensiero sistematico.* Milano, Franco Angeli, 2008.

John Scotus Eriugena, which was in fact a translation functional to the Carolingian dream of building a European political order. The *corpus aeropagiticum* is essentially the expression of Neoplatonism in the 6th century, which is in turn the evolution of Plotinus' thought.

I was convinced that in Neoplatonism (not necessarily in Plotinus, but in the work of his successors) the basic structures of modern thought (and its concept of legal order) can be found. These structures have substantially a Gnostic nature, because they imply an absolute separation (a dualism) between God and the world, the one and the many, spirit and matter, substance and form, good and evil, truth and opinions, etc. Going deeply into Platonism, I realized that the most suitable theoretical categories to understand this kind of philosophy/religion were those of 'identity' and 'difference' – in this sense this phase of my research has a more strongly metaphysical character than my previous studies.

Modern culture seemed to be that of the exclusive preference for identity: A = A, the tautological basis of the analytical method (while the difference was left to insignificance). But also the basis of individualism in ethical and political theories. It was the old preplatonic idea of the principle *(arche)* as undifferentiated *(amorphon, aneidon, apeiron...)*, and of differences as deceptive appearances. An idea magnificently criticized by Plato in his *Sophist* when he speaks of 'parricide'.[14]

In this way terms like 'classic' and 'modern' no longer have a merely chronological meaning for me. They denote two forms of thought: one involving the idea of principle as including, besides identity, also difference; the other connected *only* to identity and to the Gnostic (and before Eleatic) separation between being and non-being. Since the 'modern' view implies the notion of undifferentiated principle, it hides in itself the consequence of apophatism and nihilism.

It seems to me that today this consequence is clearly visible, even in the legal field.

The fact is that also the thought of the Neoplatonists in the 6th century was located in an age of transition (just like Augustine's and Petrarch's ones) and this made me reflect upon the common structure that these periods seem to have, a structure characterized by the prevalence of forms that dissipate the 'co-essentiality' of identity and difference, and therefore separate the principle from the *logos*, while it should always be remembered that '*en arche en o logos*' (principle and *logos* are intimate and joint).

In the Roman missal of a couple of weeks ago (fourth Sunday after Easter) we could read, in the Letter of St. James, that '*Apud Patrem non est transmutatio nec vicissitudinis adumbratio. Voluntarie enim genuit nos verbo veritatis*'[15] (In God the Father there is no transmutation or shadow of change. He voluntarily generated us through the Verb of truth) – meaning that the Father is always identic to Himself even when He differentiates through the Logos of the Son.

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[14] Plato: *Soph*. 241d ff.

[15] *Iac*. 1, 17.

If I were asked today about the specificity of European culture, I would say (or rather, I would repeat on the shoulders of giants) that it consists in remembering and constantly forgetting this fundamental truth.

5. Legal argumentation as a search for judicial truth

Even ours seems to be a time of transition. Not only because Heidegger said it, but because what is called 'post-modernism'[16] seems to have many features of '*no longer not yet*'. Actually it looks to me rather a '*late* modernism', since through it the theoretical (nihilistic) premises of modernity come to fruition, and this is precisely the signal of the end of a cycle: an end we do not know how long.

The issue of the relationship between identity and difference had been analyzed by me, as I said, above all in the context of metaphysics and the history of philosophy (my book on Neoplatonism was published in 2008), but my gaze was mainly focused on legal logic. It was time to draw conclusions in this field. Among the many consequences of the idea of a principle which is also *logos* – which 'speaks to men', which makes it possible to meet the Truth in the world – there is also that for which the legal norm is not simply the product of a normative system either formal (as in Kelsen) or empirical (as in the realists). I do not have the time here to articulate this theoretical passage in detail (which in any case would be of little interest to the legal positivists enemies of metaphysics), so I hope it can be understood intuitively.

In a very general sense, in a positivist mentality the legal norm is valid on the basis of its 'pedigree',[17] and represents the main focus of the attention of jurists. Legal positivism is strongly *nomocentric*. But according to a mentality rooted in the idea of principle-*logos*, the legal norm corresponds rather to one of the elements that have the capacity to link two claims or two opposite behaviors within the public and institutional context of the trial. The trial, and not the norm, is the historical and conceptual origin of law (as the ancient Greeks had already discovered). And the so-called 'judicial truth' is the result of this connection. Therefore it is crucial to know the ways in which this truth can be sought in the context of the judicial process. It is there that the main focus of jurists' attention should be focused: on the set of rational procedures aimed at deciding on the case.

In light of this perspective, in 2000 a series of annual conferences called 'Trento Days on Rhetoric' (*Giornate Tridentine di Retorica*, GTR) took place at the University of Trento, and in 2004 the Research Center on Legal Methodology (CERMEG) was founded: two initiatives that aspire to create a dialogue between philosophers and legal practitioners on the subject of the search for judicial truth – initiatives that still exist and operate actively.

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[16] Jean-François Lyotard: *La condition postmoderne: rapport sur le savoir*. Paris, Les Éditions de Minuit, 1979.

[17] See on the issue Kenneth E. Himma: Legal Positivism. In: *Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. https://www.iep.utm.edu/legalpos/

Such methodological approach means that in recent years my studies have focused almost exclusively on issues of legal argumentation and judicial rhetoric,[18] perhaps the only ones that have become known (to some extent) in the international debate. However, I would like to stress that behind them there is a metaphysics, without which I would have no interest in discussing argumentative theories. Indeed, there would be much to say about the success of the so-called 'argumentative turn', as well as the so-called 'pragmatic' one in linguistics. On the one hand, these 'turns' must be welcomed, to the extent that they tend to overcome the logical reductionism of modernity and rediscover the classical perspective. On the other hand, however, they must be evaluated with caution, to the extent that they tend to associate themselves with a skeptical attitude about the search for truth.

Let's think about the case of law. After the crisis of legal positivism, the legal positivists have not ceased their *nomocentric* theoretical approach. They continue to keep the norm at the center of attention, the only difference is that from the norm *of the legislator* they shifted to the norm *of judges*, very familiar in the context of common law, but traditionally much less in civil law. It is not just anglophilia: the new post-positivist mood thinks to solve the theoretical problems of the normativist formalism with a new magic word – 'legal interpretation'. From my point of view, this is an operation that only moves the normative authority from the legislator to the judge, but does not yet consider the judicial process as a specific form of dialogic research. It is symptomatic that for these authors argumentation is a part of the interpretation, while in my opinion the opposite is true: interpretation is a part of the argumentation. This pan-interpretivist tendency is the most evident symptom of the fact that the norm remains central also in post-positivism (which is always positivism), but now the norm is conceived as a proposition obtained through the interpretative activity of the judges from a normative statement of the legislative authority. In short: from Hobbes' Leviathan to Dworkin's 'Judge Hercules'.

The theories that, rather than legal interpretation, deal with legal argumentation are therefore more interesting to me. There are several in different areas: philosophical, logical-philosophical, linguistic, pedagogical, cognitive etc. Some are descriptive, others prescriptive. Nevertheless, scholars of legal argumentation are not yet numerous, as can be seen by attending international conferences or academic literature. Many still prefer to argue over Dworkin and Hart or simply apply the logical-linguistic theories to legal interpretation.

6. Coming back to reality and being

I go to the conclusions. I mentioned earlier the limits of post-positivism, now I would like to say something about the limits of argumentative theories. In fact, the anti-reductionist battle that the scholars of argumentation have fiercely fought in the epistemic field, does not necessarily correspond to a victory of the concept of principle-*logos*. On the contrary, it should be noted that in most cases metaphysics continues to

[18] Maurizio Manzin: *Argomentazione giuridica e retorica forense*. Torino, Giappichelli, 2014.

be a taboo, since it is considered, implicitly or explicitly, a dangerous opportunity for dogmatism.

The mainstream argumentative theories are often (though not always) an expression of the post-modern condition, in which paradoxically dominates (I quote Lyotard)[19] the 'grand narrative' according to which we should reject any 'grand narrative' and prefer (I quote Vattimo and Rovatti)[20] a 'weak thought'. Starting with Perelman, many scholars of argumentation have maintained and do maintain that argumentative strategies are signs of a reasoning weaker than the scientific one, a reasoning limited to '*reasonableness*', since *reason* is reserved for science (perhaps they still have in their hearts the *raison* of enlightenment, who knows?).

This reasonableness-which-is-no-reason serves to find a limited consensus on particular contexts, a temporary sharing in time and space, something that does not deserve the unpronounceable name of 'truth' – a name reputed as threatening and dogmatic. Truth, as far as I am concerned, deals with a relationship between thought and reality endowed with constancy (a pipe cannot be a pipe today and an apple tomorrow, or a pipe in Rome and an apple in Budapest), whereas for many scholars of argumentation it is something that regards at most the predicates of science (and according to Lord Dummett, not even those),[21] but certainly not those of morality or law. Reasonableness thus appears to be, in many accounts, reason without truth. And history – which is always *magistra*, but not always has pupils – shows us that when the truth leaves the field of reason, the will usually arrives. And, with it, the 'law of the strongest'.

When this happens, argumentation simply becomes propaganda – marketing; rhetoric falls into the hands of the sophists, and the law, usually, into politics. Once again, the Gorgona's head of power...

For this reason it is appropriate that the issue of *truth*, of *reality*, I would say – of *being*, remains at the center of the debate on legal argumentation. The study of natural law, to which this day is dedicated, is the way in which for centuries the Greek-Roman and then Christian culture – i.e. the European culture – has practiced, in the field of law, the search for the relationship between reality, reason and truth (using some ancient and venerable words: *natura*, *ratio*, *Deus*). I am therefore very pleased to make a small contribution to such a remarkable tradition, and I myself consider this *lectio magistralis* a precious opportunity to reflect once again on the nature of law.

7. Conclusion

Before concluding my *lectio*, I would like to make a clarification. I was told that I am the first 'non-Hungarian' scholar to receive this prestigious award. This exception certainly makes me proud and grateful, but I must point out that it is not entirely true. In

[19] Lyotard op.cit.

[20] Gianni Vattimo – Pier Aldo Rovatti (eds.): *Weak Thought*. New York, State University of New York, 2013., original edition: *Il pensiero debole*. Transl. by Peter Carravetta.Milano, Feltrinelli, 1988.,

[21] Michael Dummett: *Truth and Other Enigmas*. Harvard, Harvard University Press, 1978.

fact, from the part of my mother's paternal branch I too have Hungarian blood flowing through my veins, which dates back to the time of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. So, at least for a small part, I can also claim the title of 'Hungarian scholar'. And this too is a fact that makes me proud, since my emotional and cultural ties with the homeland of the great king Saint Stephan are strong. My friendship with many Hungarian colleagues is in fact enriched by the great consideration I have for this nation, and for its historical role as a bastion of European and Christian identity. I believe that in our times this role is even more justified, and with this hope I thank again all the esteemed colleagues of Pázmany Péter Catholic University in Budapest.